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I.—PROCEEDINGS OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY AND ITS FRIENDS, HELD AT EXETER-HALL, ON SATURDAY, THE 23rd OF APRIL, 1831, THE RIGHT HON. LORD SUFFIELD IN THE CHAIR,—CONTAINING THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SPEECHES DELIVERED, AND THE RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED ON THAT OCCASION.

II.—ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, ADOPTED AT THE SAME GENERAL MEETING.

I.—PROCEEDINGS OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY AND ITS FRIENDS, HELD AT EXETER-HALL, ON SATURDAY THE 23rd OF APRIL, 1831.

This was the most numerous meeting of the friends of the Anti-Slavery cause probably ever yet assembled in England under one roof. The new and spacious Hall where it met, and which is capable of containing nearly three thousand persons, was filled to overflowing, long before the proceedings commenced; and multitudes went away without being able to obtain admittance. Among those present, we observed the following noblemen and gentlemen, viz:—Lords Suffield and Calthorpe, the Hon. and Rev. G. Noel, Sir James Mackintosh, Dr. Lushington, Messrs. T. F. Buxton, William Smith, W. Whitmore, D. Sykes, Daniel O'Connell, Shiel, Briscoe, Weyland, Allen, Pownall, G. Stephen, Rev. Messrs. D. Wilson, J. W. Cunningham, Richard Watson, John Burnett, and many other persons of high respectability.

Lord SUFFIELD, having been called to take the chair, in the unavoidable absence of His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, opened the proceedings.

He assured the meeting that it was with unfeigned diffidence he took the post of honour, to which, by its kindness, he had been advanced. He came not there expecting to take any precedence on account of his rank—or believing that he had any peculiar qualification for that station on account of anything he could offer in support of the object of the meeting. He came there without pretension to any other qualification than the zeal which he possessed for the extinction of slavery. On this, however, he would assert his right firmly and stoutly, for he yielded to no man—not even to his Hon. Friend (Mr. Buxton)—in cordial, deep-rooted, and, he hoped, persevering detestation of that most wretched and degrading system. It was not his province, as Chairman, to enter at any

length into the subject; but he felt it his duty to say a few words as to the constitution and objects of this Society. Although in the abolition of the Slave Trade, the entire extinction of slavery itself was never lost sight of, fifteen years were suffered to elapse before this Society was instituted. And why was it instituted? And how did it originate? The high station, the rank, the wealth, the Parliamentary influence of the West India planters were so great and powerful, that it became necessary to have some active and well-organized Association to compete with them. He meant no disrespect to the press, to the freedom of which he was a sincere friend, when he said that it was but too ready to act, as we are all too prone to act and to speak—for money; and by writers in the pay of the West Indian Colonists it had been frequently made the organ of attacks upon the character of those who wished to put an end to the abominable system of slavery. To meet this influence, as well as to promulgate well-authenticated facts which were necessary to be known, and to produce those arguments which should prove that the friends of abolition were not engaged in an idle speculation, the formation of such a Society as this became necessary. Such facts and arguments this Society had furnished; and he felt convinced that the public only required to have these brought fully before them in order to ensure the final triumph of this great cause. He was not one of the founders of the Society, but he was very early induced to join it, from his attachment to freedom as an Englishman, and from his sense of humanity as a man and a Christian; but if he were not a lover of freedom, even if he did not believe in Christianity, he should still believe himself bound to support this Society from a natural sense of justice and a deep abhorrence of the hideous effects of slavery. In what did the evils of slavery consist? Was it in the personal suffering of the slave—in the abridgment of human comfort and of human life, and the sad degradation of human nature, which were incidental to his condition? Was it in the separation of the parent from the child, the husband from the wife, the severing of all social ties—for all these he charged upon the advocates of slavery? But he charged more. These poor creatures had souls like ourselves; and he must say, without presuming to measure the extent of Divine mercy in another world, that owing to the deplorable neglect of moral and religious instruction to the negroes we expose them to guilt and crime, for which we may be made responsible; and he feared that for such crimes the vengeance of Heaven might fall upon those through whose neglect they had been committed. The Noble Lord then proceeded to contend, that such power as owners held over slaves, was in its very nature liable to gross abuse, and could not be safely trusted to any class of men. He did not mean to say that there were not men of good and kind feelings among the owners of slaves. But he maintained, that as a class, the slave-owners are blinded by their residence in the West Indies; that they cannot judge of the effects of the system as others do; but are led by early habits and associations to look upon the slaves as so many animals, and not as being possessed of the same common nature with themselves; and such, even upon men of the best natural dispositions, were the inevitable effects of the slave system. He would not advert, in detail, to the cruelties which are exercised upon the slaves. That such atrocities do exist, we had the testimony of undoubted facts. But he would advert to the one fact of the reversal of the law of nature in the West Indies. That law is, increase and multiply; but in the sugar islands there is a diminution of the population to an enormous extent. This argument was recently brought forward by Mr. Buxton, in Parliament, and it is unanswerable. Under the very same heaven, and tread-

ng on the very same soil, those who are held in slavery, diminish—those who are free, increase. This was proved from the population returns. There was one circumstance worthy of special notice, in regard to the cruelties practised in the West Indies. It has been said, “Don’t tell us of the cruelties practised in the Colonies; go and look at the records of the Old Bailey, and see what cruelties are committed in England; look at the conduct of masters towards their apprentices, for instance.” But there was a remarkable difference in the two cases. In the West Indies, if a man be convicted of the murder of a slave, (which is no ordinary or easy matter), he may be fined a sum of money and be imprisoned for three months; but then petitions will be sent to this country to have his sentence mitigated, and when this is not allowed, and his punishment actually takes place, his case is deeply deplored, and at the expiration of the period of his confinement, his friends prepare for him a grand *fete*, and unite in congratulating him on the termination of his *hard* punishment! Now what is the case in this country when a tyrannical master inflicts cruelties and death on his servant or apprentice? He is dragged to Bow-street; and such is the rage of the populace against him that the police are called in to protect him; if he is convicted, he is hanged for his crime, while hundreds and thousands assemble to pour their execrations upon him. Did not this contrast speak volumes as to the state of feeling in the Slave Colonies? And should it not determine us to act with vigour? “It has been said,” added his Lordship, “that we indulge in these enthusiastic views without any regard to the property of others. I would not designedly injure any man—but I say, let them prove their damage, and I will be among the first to repair it. The British public will unite with pleasure to repair any real damage which may be done by the abolition of this execrable system. But the planters shift their ground wonderfully: at one time they will not hear of compensation at all; at other times they speak of a sum almost like our National Debt. And then, they wish the compensation to come first. But I say let them do justice first, and then I, for one, will go to the utmost extent of my power to make up for their damage.” His Lordship sat down amid much applause.

Mr. Buxton observed, that he had to propose a very short, but very pithy Resolution. It was this—“That the object of this Meeting is the entire extinction of negro slavery.” (Cheers.) He could not address the Meeting on this occasion without feelings of peculiar satisfaction—a satisfaction arising chiefly from the contrast of the situation of the friends of abolition at present with what it had been ten years since. About ten years ago he attended a meeting—not an assembly like the present—but a meeting composed of a few individuals, who, though of high character, were not distinguished by rank or influence; whose forlorn purpose was to consider whether it was possible to do *any thing* for the cause of the negro. Now, however, what was their situation? That immense theatre in which they were assembled was not sufficient to contain the large concourse of respectable individuals who were anxious to be present at their deliberations, and who were all, he firmly believed, disposed to assist in promoting the abolition of slavery. But the friends of that good cause were not limited to that great assembly. He held in his hand a letter from a prince of the blood royal of England, the Duke of Gloucester, lamenting that indisposition, and that only, should deprive him of the happiness and the honour of assisting on this occasion. (Cheers.) He had also a letter from the Lord High Chancellor of England (immense cheering), who in his present elevated situation expressed the same hatred of oppression and detestation of slavery which distinguished him when he was only the most eloquent

and most powerful commoner in England. He had also a letter from their excellent friend William Wilberforce, the exertions of whose early life were crowned with one of the greatest victories that were ever achieved in the cause of humanity, and who now panted that in the autumn of his years he might have the happiness of seeing the completion of a work so nobly commenced. (Great cheers.) But were these the only grounds of satisfaction which he had on this occasion? Were the public at large indifferent to this great work? Had they not a proof in the 5,000 petitions already deposited in the archives of Parliament, unequivocally declaring that the voice of the people was in favour of this great cause, and that that great voice *would* be heard? (Hear, hear.) But what had been heard from the Ministers of the Crown, within the walls of Parliament? He had thought it his duty to oppose their wishes as to the bringing on of this question; for he was resolved that it should be discussed before a dissolution could take place. They differed from him as to the time and mode of bringing forward that discussion; yet what had been the sentiments expressed by them on that occasion? Was it a tame and dastardly intimation, that, perhaps, at some very distant time, and by some means exceedingly gradual indeed, it might be expedient to consider whether it might not be as well, to introduce something like justice into our dealings with the Negro?—to mix at least a little temperate portion of humanity in our dealings? No; it was a bold and manly avowal on their part, that the Negroes are men, and that they shall no longer be treated as brutes—(applause;) that those whom some, most irrationally and most presumptuously, have dared to call their *chattels*, are God's rational creatures, and entitled, as well as the loftiest amongst us, to a full and unqualified participation in every natural right and every moral privilege. (Cheers.) That is the point in which they ought to be looked at and treated, most assuredly, and there is no distinction but that of colour. (Cheers.) In point of natural right and of moral privilege, the lowest Negro is equal to the Noble Lord who now sits in the chair. (Cheers.) From the lips of persons closely connected with Government, he had heard within these few days, language, sentiments, and doctrines, which he might actually have mistaken for his own, had they not been infinitely more eloquently expressed. (Hear, hear.) Now he might differ with Government as to one point—as to the mode of operation, as to the best means of attaining a common object. They might think that the first step ought to be to *lighten* the chains that bind the Negro slave—whereas he thought that the first step should be to *burst the chains asunder*. (Great cheering.) They might think, and might adduce very plausible reasons to support their opinion, that we ought in the first place to *mitigate* the rigour of slavery, and alleviate the condition of the Negro—while he thought (and it was rather reluctantly that he had been obliged to come to that decision) that the first thing to be done is to resort to the *eternal principles of justice*. (Great cheering.) But if perhaps they might differ as to the means of attaining the ultimate ob-

* The number of petitions for the Abolition of Slavery, presented to the House of Commons from the commencement of the Session in October, 1830, to the Dissolution of Parliament on the 23d of April, 1831, was *five thousand four hundred and eighty-four*;—a number far larger, it is believed, than has ever before been presented in one Session on any other subject of public interest. An alphabetical list of this immense body of petitions, has been carefully abstracted from the Votes of Parliament, and arranged in Counties, with a view to publication.

ject, they differed not at all (and this filled him with unspeakable satisfaction) as to the object of their common aim—the utter extinction of *slavery*, the emancipation of every slave throughout the British dominions. To that they were pledged as deeply and decidedly as we ourselves—and most heartily did he thank them for it. (Great cheering.)

But whatever satisfaction we might derive from the voice of the people—and he felt the greatest satisfaction in the fact that that voice had been raised so unequivocally in our cause;—however grateful we might be for the declarations of Ministers, who have spoken honestly on this question;—and however animated we might feel by the concurrence of the great and good in endeavouring to promote our glorious object; yet all these were feeble and trivial encouragements, compared with that which we had when we began, and which, he doubted not, would attend us till we closed our operations—the settled conviction, namely, that this cause is in unison with the principles of eternal justice, and with the tenets of the Christian religion; and that, therefore, the work *will* prevail, *will* prosper, in spite of all adversaries and all obstacles, because (he repeated it humbly but confidently) it is the work of God himself. (Great applause.)

His noble friend in the chair, had adverted to the debate on the subject of slavery which recently took place in Parliament. It would be deception on his part if he did not confess that he looked back to that debate with feelings of great satisfaction, and of gratitude to some of those who took part in it. Not to all—nor to some even who took a very prominent part in that discussion—not for example to his worthy and learned friend Dr. Lushington—nor to the Attorney-General—did he presume to tender his gratitude. It was not his cause more than it was their own cause. He merely did them the justice to suppose that they would stick to their principles; and if they had, on that occasion, most ably and eloquently supported him, it was only what he had confidently expected from them. He knew that no alteration of circumstances could possibly induce them to abandon those principles. It was true that amongst the numerous arguments which were urged for the purpose of persuading him that it was expedient, just at the eve of a Dissolution of Parliament, to abandon his motion, one was to this effect—“Your old friends are now some of them in office—and office works a wonderful transformation in human character. When ‘in place’ men see things in an altered light, looking down, as it were, from a higher eminence. A mere lawyer, for instance, may hate slavery as much as he pleases; but an Attorney-General—and above all a Lord High Chancellor—whatever might have been their former prepossessions, must necessarily speak with a becoming courtesy and reverence of so ancient, so venerable, so lawful, and so laudable a system as that of slavery!” (Hear, hear.) He however knew the men better. The circumstance reminded him of a captain of a British ship of war, who was told that there was a disposition to mutiny amongst his crew, and that he had better not bring his ship into action, as his men would not fight. “Not fight!” said he, “I shall soon try that.” And he immediately gave directions that the ship should be brought right into the line of battle. Then addressing himself to the crew, he said, “Now, my lads, I have been told that I ought not to bring you into action, for that you will not fight; but I shall instantly lay you alongside of one of the enemy’s ships, and then let me see if you can be prevented from fighting.” (Cheers and laughter.) He (Mr. Buxton) had acted on the same principle. He had brought his excellent friends alongside of the enemy, and fight they did, and most nobly too,—and no thanks to them, for they could not help it. (Hear, hear.) But though he would not

express any gratitude to his Hon. and Learned Friends, he must offer his thanks to one who took part in that debate—he meant the Noble Lord Howick. His speech showed that he had not been idle since he came into office. His speech was also one of eloquence, and showed very commendable industry. But though entitled to praise on these accounts, he gave the Noble Lord far greater credit for this, that though the son of the Premier—himself too holding office—he threw off, with noble manliness, all official reserve, and spoke of slavery as a man and an Englishman ought to speak of a system so inhuman and detestable. (Cheers.) In what he (Mr. Buxton) had stated in the House on this subject, he had studiously avoided any appeals to the passions or feelings by any detail of the recent atrocious cases of cruelty to negro slaves—some of which had been brought to light here only a few hours before that discussion; but he owned that he felt it a hard task to abstain from mentioning some of them: for instance, that of the Rev. Mr. Bridges, who had cruelly flogged his female servant for the offence of over-roasting, or under-roasting, (he did not precisely recollect which,) a turkey which he had for his Sunday's dinner. Yet so little was thought of the circumstances of that cruel case, by the local authorities, that, as he learned by letters received within these two days from Jamaica, this very gentleman had been, ever since, a frequent guest at the table of the Governor. Another case which he might have brought forward was that of the worshipful Mr. Betty, a magistrate, who had flogged a slave to the very verge of the grave—till the back of the unfortunate man was one mass of corruption—and for what? for presuming to worship his God in that way which his conscience dictated. There was also the notorious and most revolting case of the Mosses. He owned he had great difficulty in restraining himself from the mention of these and similar topics during the discussion in the House. He had, however, thought it a duty which he owed to the cause, to abstain from such details, and to confine himself to a dry, dull, stupid statement—as dull as a parish register, and stupid as a mathematical problem. The only one merit it had was that it was, in point of fact, a parish register, sworn to by the West Indians themselves, and proving to mathematical demonstration, from official returns of the mortality that existed amongst the slaves, that this ancient, this venerable, this patriarchal system of slavery, had caused the destruction—the murder, he might say—of 45,000 human beings in our colonies, in the brief space of ten years! He had shewn that this system was actually at this moment in operation—that this deadly and devouring mortality was in hourly operation, compared with which the worst scourges of human nature,—the havoc of war, the visitations of pestilence and famine, as operating upon the life of man, were feeble and transient evils. It was a dull and dry statement perhaps; but it was a convincing one; and he had not yet heard any thing in the shape of argument in reply to it. (Cheers.)

In the House of Commons, one might meet with many gentlemen who would tell us that slavery is the best possible condition for the Negro, and that that condition is a very happy one. Why, what said a Gallant Admiral, who was once examined on the subject, and who stated that he had witnessed much of the practice of colonial slavery? "The condition of a slave," said he, "is so happy, that it is to be envied. I wish that I myself were a slave." (Hear, hear, and a laugh.) But as for the advantages and blessings of slavery, of which he had heard so often, he (Mr. Buxton) was never able to discover them. He had never, to be sure, been in the West Indies; but he would just ask one question of those who eulogized and defended this humane, and commodious, and comfortable system—how does it happen that it should cause the

destruction, in ten years, of 45,000 of our fellow creatures? You allege that the Negroes are a happy people—happier than the British peasantry. We don't contradict you; we only ask how happens it that this superlatively happy people, and who enjoy so many comforts, do not increase? or rather why do they decrease, while the free black population is increasing rapidly? This is the question—and he declared that slavery, with all its merits, must answer for this; or rather that we—that the British people, must answer—to our own consciences, and to the God of heaven, for the sanction which we give to such an enormity. (Hear, hear.) This was the dull—the stupid argument he had used. He had abstained from bringing forward any particular cases of cruelty, not that he did not think it right to bring them forward—but because he thought it might be more convincing to the judgment of reasonable men to be furnished with a statement of deaths to the amount of 45,000, within the last ten years, occasioned by the cruelties of a system of degradation and misery, than by dwelling upon any particular isolated instance, however great its enormity might be. He thought it was in some respects to be lamented, that individual acts of cruelty should excite more attention, and elicit more sympathy from the British public, than all the combined evidence of the population returns. That case of the Mosses, for instance, had excited, as undoubtedly it was well calculated to do, a very intense feeling in this country. In the inimitable despatch of Mr. Huskisson, the whole picture in all its affecting details, had been brought before us. In the first line was the mention of “the seventeen nights,” the last seventeen of her existence, which this poor tortured female slave passed in the stocks; then the bringing in of her own father to flog her, for even this refinement of cruelty was not wanting, making the hands of the parent the instruments of the torture of his agonized child; then the statement of the amiable mistress, who put red pepper into the eyes of the wretched victim until she became blind; then flogging her for being blind; then flogging her for pretending to be ill; and at length finding her dead on the field a few hours after she was released. And what followed? Not the irritation of the public, which, in such a case, in this country, would have required, as had been well observed by his Noble Friend, the intervention of the police to prevent the infliction of summary punishment on the offender: no such thing,—but a petition of the whole white population of the island, praying for the mitigation of the paltry sentence, on the ground too of the “great humanity” of the perpetrators of this outrage on human nature; and last of all, a grand *fete* to celebrate their release on the completion of their period of imprisonment, as if they had been heroes in the cause of freedom, or martyrs in the cause of religion. This no doubt was an atrocious case; it was almost impossible that any one ingredient of additional atrocity could be imagined; and the utmost indignation of which our minds are capable, is lavished on the foul perpetrators of the cruelty. But here comes our argument:—That individual case is, after all, but a trifle compared with the multitude of murders which slavery occasions as a system; it is only one murder out of 45,000, which the system within the last ten years has inflicted. (Hear, hear.) It was an incident of more graphic and picturesque effect perhaps; but far less conclusive to the sober judgment of reasonable men than those population returns which prove the astounding fact, that not merely one, but ten murders have been perpetrated every day for the last ten years in our own Colonies, and that this wholesale destruction of human life is still going on at the same ratio! Much as he deplored the occurrence of a single instance of cruelty and barbarity, he owned he could wish (he knew

not whether the meeting would go along with him) that such acts of violence and atrocity were more frequently made known, in order that the public attention might be more forcibly called to the horrors of the system, and the public voice more loudly raised to demand its speedy extinction. But only look again at the population returns. From these documents it appeared that two thousand eight hundred and ninety-two persons, a number nearly as great as that of the assembly he then addressed, had perished in the small island of Tobago within ten years, by the effects of slavery. If it were said that 2,892 human beings, charged with no offence, were dragged into the public market, and there put to the sword, would not the meeting consider it one of the most appalling acts of barbarity ever perpetrated? would we not almost wonder that the earth had not opened to swallow up the perpetrators of such an outrage on humanity? Yet, incredible as seemed the fact, we were the very people who provided the soldiers to protect those who caused equal destruction of human life—and who paid, out of our own pockets, the bounties and protecting duties by which this odious system, with all its horrible details, was encouraged. And yet the facts were demonstrably true, that by this system, there were destroyed within the time he had mentioned—in Tobago, 2,892; in Jamaica, 17,000; in Demerara, 6,000!—But it was unnecessary for him to go through the melancholy detail. He would repeat the astounding truth, in order that they might carry it home with them to reflect upon, that for this we provided the means—we paid the troops—we paid the bounties by which the whole was encouraged.

The result of all his study and all his inquiries into the nature and effects of slavery was, that he abhorred it more than ever. He hated slavery from the beginning to the end. In every stage and condition it was detestable, as founded upon the grossest injustice. See what was the condition of the Negro slave—condemned to perpetual slavery, without hope of release; his posterity condemned to the same dreadful state. And for what? What had he done to deserve this? Nothing. His misfortune was made his crime; his ancestors had been made the victims of British cupidity—had become the prey of pirates, sent out to tear them from their country and their friends—to rob them of that which was dearer to them than life—their liberty; and because this act of outrage was committed on the ancestors, the whole of the posterity were condemned to perpetual slavery! Or, if any of them should come to a sense of his degraded condition—should attempt to throw off his chains, and to assert his claim to the character and dignity of man, British soldiers were ready to put him to the sword, or British judges to send him to the scaffold. (Cheers.) To his Reverend friends who might address the Meeting, he would leave the task of pointing out that other and still more dreadful effect of slavery; by which the slave-owner attempted to shut him out from that portal which God in his mercy opened to all the human race. The comforts of religion which were open to, and should be the solace of all, were either wholly denied to the slave, or he was so restricted as to religious instruction, that he derived little or no benefit from it. Marriage was not legalized to him—to him the Sabbath was not yet appointed—Yes! it was appointed his market-day. The labour of the week was taken by his owner; the Sunday, from want of other time, he was forced to devote to his own temporal affairs, and to the cultivation of food for his own subsistence. His owner taught him not the value of a Sabbath in any other sense; nay, so far from it, that instances were not wanting in which the slave was subjected to the lash, for no other offence than that of meeting and joining in prayer with a few of his poor abject brethren—for doing

that which tended most of all to raise him above the degrading condition to which he was reduced. He would not longer dwell upon these things. It was impossible for him to express the feelings with which he looked upon the whole system. The honest and sincere effect of the discovery of these facts was, that he was more than ever resolved to exert himself to the utmost for the early and utter extinction of slavery. He well remembered the feelings of horror and indignation with which, in early life, he had read the history of the extermination of the original inhabitants of South America by the Spaniards. He then thought there never was a people so atrocious and so wicked as they, and if anybody had told him that our own countrymen were equally criminal—were participators in similar cruelties, he could not have believed it possible. Spain, before she had loaded herself with this atrocious guilt, with this weight of innocent blood, was a proud and a powerful nation. What had she since become? From that moment, had she not gradually continued to fall lower and lower in the scale of nations, till she had reached the present abyss of her debasement? In this fate he beheld the punishment for their atrocities by the hand of God—the vengeance of heaven for the blood of the helpless. But he would put it to every man's conscience, are not we doing the same thing? What was the crime of the Spaniards? Was it not the extirpation of innocent people? And what are we doing in Demerara and Trinidad and our other slave colonies? We are exterminating innocent people. He confessed that he looked upon the permission of slavery one hour longer than is absolutely necessary, and that necessity limited only by considerations for the Negro, as a crime,—a crime of the deepest dye—a crime distinct and apart from all others—one of those crimes, in short, which, if Scripture is to be believed, has called down upon delinquent nations, the severest vengeance of heaven.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH said, that he had so often had occasion to state his sentiments on this, which he considered the greatest of all public questions, that he might have contented himself with merely discharging the duty of seconding the motion of his hon. friend. But he could not content himself with a silent or formal discharge of his duty on such an occasion; he would, therefore, offer a few observations, although his noble and hon. friends had left but very little to be said by any one.

He had more than once congratulated the friends of this cause on the exertions made by females to advance its success. In several parts of England he had witnessed their zeal, and he had uniformly observed, that in proportion as they possessed the retiring virtues of delicacy and modesty, those chief ornaments of woman, in that proportion had they come forward to defend the still higher objects of humanity and justice. He was sure that their own hearts had already answered any objections which might be made by a superficial observer with respect to the supposed inconsistency of these various qualities. They felt, which is better than any description he could give, that these various classes of virtues flow from the same source, and flow towards the same object; and that thus, in all times and places, of the characteristic virtues of their sex, the one class have served to regulate and sustain the other; while both combine towards the great object of their destination in the order of Providence, to humanize the world, to soften the hearts of men, and inspire them with that tenderness and humanity to which he now appealed on behalf of the enslaved Negroes.

It was not his intention in the least degree to depart from that spirit of calm and unanswerable argument which was adopted by his honourable friend on a late occasion in Parliament, and from which he had not departed on the present occasion; for he (Sir James) was so far from

being opposed to the English proprietors in the West Indies, that one of his chief objects was, to provide for the safety of the European inhabitants there, to rescue them from those dangers which every impartial eye must see suspended over their heads, to deliver them from those calamities which will be fatal to their lives and fortunes owing to the effects of the present system on the character and morality of the slaves. It was for the sake of every interest—of masters as well as slaves—that he earnestly desired as speedy an emancipation as it was possible to adopt. It was in order to prevent one portion of the human race in the West Indies from being degraded and destroyed, and another from being barbarised—to preserve the one from bodily, and the other from moral evils.

His excellent friend (Mr. Buxton) had not dwelt much upon details of cruelty, and had alluded only in general terms to recent atrocities of which the narrative had just reached this country, and which probably were yet unknown to the greater part of the persons who now heard him. What he should state shortly to the meeting would relate merely to a very few facts, and these not insulated and detached facts affecting only the individuals who were engaged in the cruelties they involved. They would not be at all important in that view; for mere acts of atrocity affecting only the characters of the perpetrators, might be found in any other community. But they were such as to be most intimately connected with the general character and temper which slavery never fails to create. They were the most horrible proofs, not of the guilt of this or that individual, but of the moral effect of slavery,—of the exercise of despotic power in corrupting and depraving the mind of the owner, and thus ensuring the misery, degradation, and oppression of the slave. Slavery first produced horrid passions in the mind of the master in order by these to inflict the greatest cruelties on the slave. Its road, indeed, leads to physical misery, but it is through moral guilt and atrocity and barbarity of the worst kind, that it travels thither. (Great applause.) Mr. Buxton had adverted to the dreadful story of the Rev. Mr. Bridges, a clergyman in Jamaica, who, because his female slave had roasted a turkey on the wrong day (for that was the specific offence) had first called her into what is called his *library*—where, however he did not seem to have learned many of those lessons which ought to be the chief object of visits to such a place—and there rebuked her with stern severity for this enormous offence. She knew his character, and offered to buy another turkey. He rejected that offer with indignation; and proceeded to beat and kick her. A minister of the Gospel to beat and kick a defenceless woman!—humanity shudders and religion blushes at the thought. He then ordered her to be severely flogged; and it appeared that he had another ornament for his house, a governess for his children, who in order to justify the outrage, and aggravate the punishment of this wretched slave, observed, that, “she did cook the dinner yesterday most abominably.” Now if this were all it would only be the atrocity of Mr. Bridges; and our feeling would merely be that of horror in prefixing the word *Reverend* to the name of the man who could be guilty of such an offence; but unfortunately this is the smallest part of the story. In the island of Jamaica it had appeared requisite that certain officers should be appointed to protect the slaves from oppression by their masters. The Assembly of Jamaica declined to adopt that recommendation; but they said they would adopt another institution which would answer the purpose better than that suggested by the Home Government; and they formed what they called “Councils of Protection” in the different districts of the island. Mr. Bridges was brought before one of these “Councils of Protection,” consisting of

17 persons chosen and selected for the professed purpose of protecting the negroes from oppression. These persons held a kind of council of inquiry to decide upon his case; and examined witnesses, whose testimony was now in our possession, and which leaves no more doubt of the aggravated brutality and atrocity of the conduct of Bridges than could be entertained with respect to the truth of a proposition in geometry. The result, however, was, that thirteen voted for his acquittal out of the seventeen, and four only for his conviction. This was the issue of the pretended Council of Protection—ironically so named. Now there might be persons who would say, "But you are prejudiced: perhaps these thirteen were right;—you ought to presume they were, and that your own predilections have induced you to condemn conduct which was in reality praiseworthy." But let us proceed a little farther. A statement of the facts was transmitted to England, and the Governor of Jamaica received instructions from His Majesty's Government to make inquiry into the case. The Governor endeavoured to evade the subject, and he succeeded for a certain time; but at length he was obliged to refer the case to the Attorney General of the Colony, Mr. James; and that officer gave a most excellent opinion, condemning the Council of Inquiry, and advising a prosecution immediately to be commenced against Bridges. It was not, therefore, his (Sir James's) opinion—or the opinion of the Anti-Slavery Society---or of any enthusiastic abolitionist, as to the guilt of Bridges, and of the still greater guilt of those pretended "protectors" who acquitted him, that was to be received; but it was the opinion of the Chief Law Officer of Jamaica, who though living solely in the society of West India Planters, listened to his sense of duty and justice, and in defiance of their violent prejudices pronounced a merited condemnation of this atrocious case. He referred the meeting to the excellent letter of Lord Goderich and to the papers printed by order of the late House of Commons, on this case, and which he hoped would soon be reprinted in such a manner, as that every person who chose might read and examine them, with the most searching, prying, suspicious scrutiny. For here he would warn those gentlemen who are accustomed to repeat from year to year hackneyed phrases respecting the "exaggerated statements" of the friends of Negro Emancipation, that this was not a document got up nor published by the Anti-Slavery Society, nor issued by any of the meritorious persons connected with that Association, the best proof of whose merits are the calumnies with which they have been loaded by the friends of slavery. But it is an official and parliamentary document, containing the papers which were at last extorted from the Governor of Jamaica by his Majesty's Government, and laid upon the table of the late House of Commons, by whose order it was printed. (Hear, hear.) It would be well for any man in future who denied the natural effect of slavery in corrupting and depraving the mind of man to read the whole of these papers, where he would learn that the whole of a great community, from the highest to the lowest, were so tainted by the baneful influence of the system in which they are unhappily involved, that they saw in this case nothing but blame of the prosecution and joy at the acquittal. (Hear, hear.) It was in the highest degree to be regretted that any British Governor should have advised the Government at home against instituting further inquiries into the case, under the pretence, forsooth, that Bridges was "an *indiscreet* man, and that it would give a triumph to the sectarians of his district." What must be the feelings and principles of those who look at the case with such views! When he (Sir James.) found Bridges thus described, it recalled to him a humorous passage in which Mr. Addison describes with his usual success a friend

of his who used to observe great moderation and caution in his language, in so much that he sometimes carried it to the bounds of absurdity; and who, having passed some time of the morning in reading Suetonius, with inimitable gravity and composure, said to him in the evening, that "it must be admitted that Nero was a wag." (Cheers and laughter.) In the same manner the Governor of Jamaica with the most inimitable candour and justice towards this rev. gentleman, was pleased to say, that "it must be admitted that he was *somewhat indiscreet*!" But the view taken by Lord Goderich was rather different. With the feelings of an Englishman his Lordship called his conduct "unmanly and brutal," and directed that "if Mr. Bridges were a magistrate he should be immediately struck off the commission." (Loud cheers.)

To another case he would call the attention of the audience, not with the paltry view of reflecting on individuals, but with the view of exhibiting the practical effects of slavery, in the temper and character of English communities in various parts of the king's dominions, and of the absolute necessity, were it only for this degrading and pernicious effect, to abolish a system which creates such diabolical vices. In the year 1829, Lord Combermere had a plantation in the island of Nevis, called the Stapleton Estate. When he was governor of Barbadoes, with all the aid and information that position enabled him to collect; he had chosen an overseer, named Walley, and servants of various descriptions, for the management of his plantation, and who had been so very strongly recommended to him, that he thought he might, with perfect satisfaction to his feelings and conscience, return from the West Indies, leaving, as he imagined, the Negroes of his estate in Nevis, an example of what could be accomplished by a benevolent master—to shew how happy even slaves might be rendered by good treatment. The experiment proved the utmost that such a master could effect, and how little that amounted to. After all the particular care his lordship had taken to place suitable persons in charge of the property, what was the result? He would not speak of the general effects of mortality; but on the Stapleton Estate, which contained 240 slaves at the time that Lord Combermere unsuspectingly delivered it over to Walley, in two years and a half forty-four slaves had died. (Hear, hear.) Allowance being made for the births, the consequence was, according to the most rigid calculation, that if Walley had continued to administer that estate for ten years, he would have reduced the number from 240 slaves to 28. He did not think it worth while to pursue the calculation further, but this point of it he must confess struck him with horror. (Hear, hear.) There was something in human nature which makes particular cases to take hold more deeply of the feelings than any general statements. In the former there was an approach to individuality, while in the latter there was something too undefined to strike and permanently to impress the mind. When there were only small numbers, they are more easily comprehended, recollected, and reproduced to the imagination, than in the case of the destruction of great multitudes of men. In the latter case, we feel as if we perused the page of fictitious narrative, while the former has, from its very construction, the individual features of simplicity or truth inscribed upon it. What we can hardly distinctly conceive or imagine, it is difficult for us to sympathise with. (Hear, hear.) Here we had the whole system of the West Indies concentrated within the narrow limits of a private estate. We saw that in two years and a half nearly one-fifth part of the negroes were destroyed; and we saw also under what apparent advantages this vast proportion perished. Could there, then, he asked, be a more melancholy proof of the

incurable evils of the state of slavery than this, that a person so well qualified, so much disposed, to place his Negroes in the happiest condition that their circumstances would admit of, should thus be so cruelly disappointed?—that his plantation in Nevis, instead of being, what he fondly dreamt it would be, a sort of imaginary paradise, had become an example which would be cited with abhorrence to the latest generations of mankind, to prove how little can be effected, in the case of institutions so detestable as slavery, by the kindness and humane anxiety and consideration of any individual—and how little, above all, the respectable part of the West Indians in this country are aware of the manner in which their authority is opposed, discredit brought upon their character, and their best intentions defeated, by those whom they had selected even with the utmost care to carry them into effect. (Hear, hear.)

He came now to another stage in those proceedings. The Attorney General here again did his duty. He presented bills against Walley for murder and for manslaughter, supported by ample and indisputable evidence. But Walley escaped from both, either owing to the indisposition of the inhabitants of that Island to do justice, or to the inadequacy of those laws which they had passed, relative to the admissibility of the evidence of slaves. He was acquitted upon all. In order to prove that his (Sir J. Mackintosh's) indignation at this acquittal was just, he would refer to Lord Combermere's letter to Lord Goderich on the proceedings, which would fully bear him out. In that letter, he stated, that Lord Goderich's communications both pained and surprised him, for that he had himself visited the estates, appointed new men, lightened their labour, and thought to give comfort to his slaves; but it was all in vain, as every good effort of his had been blasted by the pestilential effect of this immitigable system. One sentence of this letter would give an indication of the temper and character which was amongst the worst effects of slavery. It was, "But I cannot expect that a jury of St. Kitt's or Nevis will do their duty." And Lord Goderich had properly remarked, that if "the grand juries in the case of Walley had been right, the consequence was, that the slaves were not protected by the law." Such, then, were the melancholy features of this atrocious case. And yet there was nothing peculiarly pestilential in the moral atmosphere of St. Kitt's or Nevis; but the general atmosphere of all the slave colonies was just what might be expected to produce results such as were in this case manifested. (Hear, hear.)

Now what was it, he would ask, that we were here meeting to do? To contribute by every effort in our power, to put down and to extinguish for ever this atrocious and accursed system. An opportunity was now afforded, of which he would not speak in a political point of view; but the opportunity now furnished by the dissolution of Parliament, he was persuaded this assembly would not suffer to pass without employing it to the best of their power, to obtain once more that strong and general manifestation of disapprobation and abhorrence of the system, which the people of England had unanimously expressed at the last general election, and which, he believed, they were ready to express again. When, he said, the people of England, he referred to the people of the British Islands, not meaning to insinuate that any part of the United Kingdom had evinced less forwardness than another in this great cause. (Loud cheers.) He trusted that this demonstration of public feeling would be made; and that at a moment when such declarations had been made, and such measures proposed by the king's government, (whether entirely satisfactory to all benevolent men or not,) he hoped the people would do their utmost to obtain from can-

didates such declarations as might aid a friendly government in putting an end to this frightful system, at which humanity shudders. (Loud cheers.) No man was more desirous than he was of adhering to the strict line of demarcation, which ought to separate all religious allusions from political and civil discussions; yet he could not help stating to the meeting, that in other places, where men claim the character and feelings of Christians, he had very frequently heard an opinion expressed, that this cry about Colonial slaves is only the cry of sectarian preachers—of Wesleyan Methodists, of religious enthusiasts and fanatics of various sects, who pretend to impose their fantastic whims on the wisdom of Parliament and Government, and who have the presumption to claim for their fanatical fancies higher consideration than the greatest interests of the empire. He would not presume to say much upon this subject; but if their object was to deliver as soon as practicable 800,000 slaves in our Colonies, from the condition in which Kitty Hylton was under Mr. Bridges, and from the humanity of such overseers as Mr. Walley;—if their object was to prevent the repetition of such scenes of atrocity, as, upon the credit of most indisputable authority, had recently occurred;—if such be their design he should like to know what could be alleged in fair argument against it. If it be methodistical or fanatical to contend for the annihilation of such a system of crime and misery, he could wish that we had in parliament many more such fanatics—and then a system which insured impunity to such “indiscretions” as those of a Bridges or a Walley, would speedily be put an end to.

It had been advanced with ludicrous effrontery that the condition of the English peasant was worse than that of the West India slave. He would not stop to ask what would be the universal cry of horror that would be raised in this country against such masters as the Mosses, such magistrates as Bridges, or against the power of perpetrating with impunity such a massacre as Walley has committed on the Stapleton Estate. (Loud cheers.) But there was an observation which he would make. The West Indians were at least some centuries behind in this objection. The people of England knew the facts of the case. Their ancestors were never indeed subject to the cruelties and unutterable abominations of the Bridges and the Walleys, but they had had, at least, some little share in the “paradise” of middle-age darkness. We did not find however that there had been any cry to have this “paradise regained.” We had not yet heard of any applications from our peasantry (whatever were their sufferings) expressing by petition or otherwise, their desire to be again bound like their forefathers to the glebe, and subjected to such paternal authority as that so recently exercised by the Bridges and Walleys. (Hear, hear.) With respect to the interference of ministers of religion, of any denomination, he would say only this:—he had always understood that there is no precept held more sacred in the code of divine morality, which is the glory of the Christian religion, than this—“Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” He would ask whether the maintenance of such a system as West India slavery be likely to afford many opportunities of compliance with that sacred precept; and if not, what could be a more obvious and imperative part of the duty of the teachers of morality and religion than to inculcate not only the guilt of such irreclaimable wretches, but of us Englishmen who fancy we are innocent because we do not take a direct part in their guilt, but who are nevertheless undoubtedly answerable for all the horrors inseparable from that state of slavery which owes its continuance, in a great measure, to such connivance. (Loud cheers.) If it were the duty of ministers

of religion to preach duties in proportion to their importance, no subject could be more clearly within the sphere of their vocation than that of endeavouring to raise from lethargy those who fancy that they have no part in such abominations and cruelties, because, though their connivance keeps up the system, they themselves have no active share in its execution. He had a Rev. gentleman in his eye, (the Rev. Richard Watson) who had discharged that duty himself, and had inculcated it on others; and if the Wesleyans were at present most conspicuous in the cause, the most sacred principles ought to excite an active rivalry among all clergymen of every denomination, to consider themselves never more effectually the advocates of Christianity, than when they were promoting the abolition of an institution which makes it impossible to observe the rules of Christian morality towards nearly a million of human beings.—(The Rt. Hon. gentleman sat down amidst loud and long continued cheers.)

The motion was put by the chairman, and unanimously carried.

Dr. LUSHINGTON then rose and spoke as follows:—

“I RISE to address you with the deepest feelings, of the importance of the present period; knowing, as I do, that upon the result of what may occur within a short time will depend, in a very great degree, the continuance of that system which has so long disgraced England, and inflicted numberless woes on the sons of Africa,—or the adoption of measures for its complete and utter abolition. For my own part, in defiance of the threat of being deemed an enthusiast, disregarding the imputation of imprudence, and of want of regard for the lives and liberties of the white population,—I profess myself the advocate for the *speedy* and *entire* emancipation of every slave. (Enthusiastic cheers.) I am not content to wait till it pleases the good judgment of their masters—until they, who almost up to the present moment, have defended the system itself, and who contend that on the continuance of that system is embarked their own earthly prosperity—I am not content to wait until *they* shall grant us that boon. Well I know that if we depend upon their exertions—if we rely upon their good will—if we trust to their promises—not one of the vast assembly whom I now address will live to see the happy day when England shall be able to boast that slavery no longer prevails in any part of her dominions.

“Some progress indeed we have made; we have at least obtained an acknowledgement of the principle of abolition. No longer (and I heartily rejoice in the fact,) dare the most strenuous advocates in the House of Commons for the continuance of slavery defend the system itself, or venture, in the face of that house, and before the public, to broach those doctrines so long insisted on—that slavery was consistent with happiness, justice, charity, and a regard for the Word of God. That hour is past. England will not bear it—men of sense will not endure it—men of humanity abhor it. (Loud cheers.) There is not one at this hour, even though he may believe his own worldly wealth, the comfort of his wife, the advantage of his children, to be wrapped up in the perpetuation of the system, who is not compelled to express his abhorrence of it. I well remember the time when we were entertained with representations of the peace, the happiness, the tranquillity, the enjoyments of a state of slavery. I remember the time when we were told, that the negroes were well fed and comfortably clothed at the expense of the master—and comfortably maintained in old age and sheltered in sickness; having no other return to make for all these numberless favours, than easy labour for his benefit. We were taught to believe that there was nothing but merriment and joy in the West Indies; that the negroes danced in their chains, and praised

the master under whose domination they lived.—That time, I say, is gone by, and for ever. The time is come when such gross insults to the common sense and feeling of mankind can no longer be ventured upon. It is not seven years from this time, when in one of our colonies,—perhaps the one in which slavery is existing in almost its most odious form,—it was publicly announced that slavery was inconsistent with Christianity; but what was the conclusion?—not that slavery should be abolished, but that Christianity should not be taught. That was the result to which the wise, the good, the considerate, the merciful, the religious men of Demerara came! It was published in their *Gazette*—made known to the world—and thus their disgrace perpetuated. “Can you,” said the words of that publication, “can you make your negroes Christians, and use the words ‘dear brother’ or ‘sister’ to those you hold in bondage?” Why, what would be the consequence? The consequence would be “they would conceive themselves, by possibility, put on a level with yourselves, and the chains of slavery would be broken.” Most true were the words they uttered. There never was a sentiment truer than this, nor one which, if it ever came to be carried into practice, would more clearly exhibit its intrinsic truth. Make the slaves Christians—and (harder task yet!) make the owners of them Christians, and slavery must speedily cease. I know to what I expose myself. It will be said, “You slander the West Indians; you give them a character they do not deserve; large bodies of men ought not to be subject to such imputations.” Mark my answer!—1696 was the date of the Jamaica Act, in which it was declared that every slave ought to be educated and receive instruction in the Christian religion. This very year they came forward in Parliament and told you, that they have renewed that Act; but they owned at the same time that, it never had been carried into execution—for one hundred years together! I make a just charge; and, I ask again, without the interference of the British Parliament what hope have we? What prospect, but that another hundred years may elapse before that period shall arrive, when, according to the opinion of these planters, their unfortunate slaves shall be in a condition, from their religious and moral education, to receive the boon of freedom. If we postpone it till the masters have done their duty, we postpone it to an hour that never will arrive.

“I verily, and in my conscience believe, that the time is now come, when, with prudent precautions as to the manner, every slave may receive his freedom without the minutest chance of injury to the rights or the properties of the other inhabitants. Nay, I go infinitely farther:—I believe, as far as relates to the property of the white inhabitants, their interest will be most materially improved. Instead of living, as now, in perpetual fear and agitation,—instead of exacting an unwilling and precarious labour under the influence of the lash, they would then have a body of labourers, who, if paid but a very small proportion in the way of hire, would discharge a double duty with satisfaction to themselves and benefit to their proprietors. And this is the real state of human nature. There must be some motive to actuate man. You now actuate him by the fear of the lash, and, alas! by the infliction of it. Make him a freeman, and reward him for his labour, and you hold out to him the very motive which God has designed to actuate mankind—the hope of benefiting himself and improving his condition.

“I have little hope in measures of amelioration. I am thankful to His Majesty’s Government for what they have done; but I look for more. I expect but slight benefit from what they have done—some little improvement in the state and condition of the negro—some little acceleration of the means whereby some few additional individuals may acquire their

freedom. But the main mass of iniquity, the greatest evils of all—can never be removed by measures of amelioration, because these evils are, either by the blessing of Providence or by its curse, so interwoven with the system that, so long as it continues, the effects must follow the cause. I have said before, and I say it again, God hath not permitted man to say, "Thus far will I proceed in defiance of your word and no farther!" He has declared, Thou shalt not violate it; and if, in defiance of mercy, humanity, religion and truth, you will make slaves, you cannot establish a system of law by which that unfortunate condition can be safely and effectually regulated. And though it be difficult to escape from it, it is but the difficulty which attends all perpetration of crime; the greater the offence the more difficult is the task of repentance. But God in his mercy has given you the means if you have the will: if you have penitence in your hearts, he has promised to give you power to resist temptation, and finally to put down the atrocities in which you have revelled.

"The great question is, what is to be done at the present hour? By what means can we best accelerate the attainment of the object we have all now so much at heart? for I hold it but a waste of words to descant on the evils of slavery, especially to an audience long ago convinced of the degradation and wretchedness necessarily attendant on that condition. Much may now be effected, but not without great and strenuous exertions. Some of my friends, who have preceded me, have said, we will not talk of politics. I could not, I believe, so completely violate every principle of conscience and sense of right and wrong which I possess, as to intrude into this discussion any thing so entirely foreign from it as relates to the struggle of two conflicting parties. My great object—the principal object of my life—has been the attainment of the mighty end of this Society; and I regard every political object chiefly as it may furnish more effectual means of removing the enormous evil of slavery, and wiping off the disgrace which thence attaches to the British name. I say that Government have not done all I ask; but they have gone some way towards it. If I am asked what course we ought to pursue in the ensuing elections, this is my proposal:—When a candidate seeks for the favour of an elector, ask him not whether he be the friend of the Duke, or my Lord Grey, or Sir Robert Peel. Let no such question be proposed by a friend to Negro emancipation; but let him ask this question—"In your heart do you detest, abhor, and abjure Slavery?"—(*Cheers.*) Let his next question be—"Will you vote for the extinction and abolition of the system?" Mark him well—no general professions of abhorrence of slavery, no low bows and smiling countenances will do:—what Englishman is there who can refrain from expressing his detestation of slavery? But ask him whether he will lend his cordial assistance and co-operation to its immediate extinction? Should he urge—(for I am pretty well versed in the ingenious shifts with which candidates evade these questions,)—should he urge this objection—"Consider the danger to the whites?" Ask him in return, "What was the result in Mexico where the slaves were emancipated at once?" Inquire what are his reasons for apprehending danger. Make him state all those circumstances which have made such an impression on his mind. But should he go a step further, and say, "I am an advocate for amelioration, with a due regard to existing interests." If once these words escape his lips, *note against him.* The bitterest enemy, openly avowing himself, is infinitely less mischievous than that pretended friend. He prevents your exercising your influence to send to Parliament a man according to your own heart; and he goes determined to keep his promises only in appearance, and to violate them in reality. He does

not feel, in its due intensity, abhorrence of the state of slavery; he does not feel disgust at its inhumanity; he does not feel horror at the degradation and pollution in which it has involved indiscriminately white and black;—he will not do for you. But if the answer is, “I believe slavery to be a violation of the law of God; I believe it to be an utter repugnance to every dictate of morality, and to set at nought every feeling of mercy; and, feeling it so, I think it my first duty to erase it from the colonies of Britain;”—if he say, “I know not what it is to create a freehold in a human being;”—if he say, “that if men shall make a law establishing such right, they do it in defiance of the law of God;”—if he feels the weight of the guilt incumbent on the people of England; and remembers the extent of suffering which is hourly and daily, even while I address you, prevalent over 800,000 of our fellow subjects;—if he say to you, “I am the advocate for *the utter extinction of the system*; I long for the opportunity, when by my vote, influence, and speech, I may declare to the Parliament, to the country, and to the world, that my object is to relieve my conscience of its guilt, my country from its foul disgrace, and the Negro from his chains;”—if such be his replies—*vote, I say, for him. (Immense cheering.)*

“Now mark—that aid and assistance can be given by all those whom I now address, by supporting the proper candidates in various modes, saving them from the trouble of a long canvass, and preventing the unnecessary expenditure of money. These are the objects to which I call the attention of those I now address; and I wish at the same moment (would to God I possessed the power of doing it more effectually!) so to impress upon the minds of all who hear me, the description I have just given of men who are persuaded in their heart’s core and conscience that such are the atrocities of slavery, that they may go home resolving not to comment on the proceedings of this day, but determined and resolved by their deeds, and not their words only, to shew that the cause is in their hearts, and that exertions according to their ability shall be made in support of the judgment which their consciences have pronounced. I ask you all to do this. Let no one think himself insignificant; combined effort may do much. And little as the efforts of a single individual may do towards the ultimate accomplishment of our aims, yet, at least, he will have relieved his own conscience, discharged his duty to his God, and endeavoured, as much as in him lay, to benefit his suffering and outraged fellow creatures.

“I shall now take the liberty of proposing that an Address be circulated among those with whom we correspond in the country, for the purpose of stimulating them to similar exertions: and I am convinced that the appeal will not be made in vain; for I am assured in my own heart, that however powerful may be the opposition banded against us elsewhere; however strenuous the exertions of those who believe that their wealth and power depend on the continuance of the system; I am confident that the great bulk of the people of England, the great body of the people who have now received information on the subject—the whole of those who are accustomed to look into their own hearts and ask the question, “Am I doing right or wrong?”—the whole of those whose principal object of existence is to discharge their duty to their Creator and to mankind,—all, almost without exception, feel how deeply at stake is not merely the character of the nation, but the satisfaction of their own consciences, if they do not contribute every effort which God in his mercy has enabled them to make for the extinction of this opprobrious and criminal system.

“I beg to assure this assembly, that if I return to the next Parliament, I shall return with the most resolute determination, under the

blessing of God, to make this cause second to none; and in my place to advocate this truth, to support these doctrines which I have now stated; and, so far as my feeble means may go, to render all assistance to my honourable and excellent friend, whom I am proud to call my leader in this great cause; to give him every aid,—despite the scoffing of the scorner—regardless of the outcry that I am a wild enthusiast—regardless of the feelings which I know are so constantly entertained by those who never considered the subject,—that these are the imaginary portraits of a diseased mind, and not the real state of things existing in the West Indies. But I hold him an enthusiast who, ignorant of the subject matter—without taking pains to investigate, imagines that he has come to the just conclusion; and, regardless of the ordinary process of arriving at truth, professes himself at once the advocate of a cause without being able to explain the reasons of his opinion. And I hold, if a man has learned what the truth is by patient and deliberate inquiry,—if he does know the system in all the atrocities of its villany—to speak mildly, to utter sentiments of *moderation* (as they call it) on the subject, is to betray the truth—is to suppose that a man of feeling, honour and honesty, can behold these things, and yet talk of them as if they did not violate the laws of God and man, and outrage the feelings of every right-minded individual who rightly appreciates them.”

The learned Gentleman's speech was cheered throughout by enthusiastic acclamations. The Resolution and Address proposed by him were then read to the Meeting, and unanimously adopted. The Resolution was in the following terms:—

“That the time has now arrived, in which the people of England may give by their votes, as they have already given by their petitions, efficacious assistance towards delivering the Negroes from the evils of Slavery, and the nation from the guilt of tolerating it; and that the Address now read be adopted by this Meeting and circulated throughout the country.”*

The Rev. DANIEL WILSON, rose to second the resolution. It had been asked, he observed, how far the system of West India Slavery was consistent with the maxims of mercy and the general tendency of Christianity. He held the very question to be an affront—the very thought to be a slander—the very supposition to show an utter ignorance of the mercy, and benevolence, and power, which for these six thousand years, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has been developing in his different dispensations of religion, till it has been poured forth in all its glory in the New Testament dispensation, and which taught us that “God is love, and he that dwelleth in light, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” Before the grace and loveliness of Christianity,—the tenderness which it infuses—the kindness it inculcates,—the laws of equity and justice which it imposes,—before the objects and designs of God in redemption; before all these—West India Slavery appeared to be one of the most intolerable and flagrant and deeply debasing crimes that can attach to a nation bearing the sacred and glorious name of Christian. He desired to separate himself from any man professing Christianity who could hold the lawfulness of West India Slavery. For himself he thus publicly made the declaration, which he was ready to make in any other place, that after having waited,—culpably waited, he believed,—for thirty years, in the examination privately of this subject, and in the accumulation of evidence in his mind regarding it; having during that period rather shrunk from any public testimony regard-

* The Address here referred to (for which see page 280 of the present Number,) was extensively circulated in a separate shape, immediately after the General Meeting.

ing this question, and leaving such duty to devolve upon those right hon. gentlemen who advocated the Cause in Parliament; that after going thus long aloof, when he found, notwithstanding all the discussions of the enormous criminality of the system which had forced themselves upon the attention of the public, that every promise of redress had been forfeited, every expectation that the wrongs of the Negro might be righted on the grounds of political justice, disappointed;—after seeing this, his opinion two years ago, completely changed, and he now firmly believed it to be the duty of every minister of religion to come forward and join the sacred phalanx who called on the legislature to listen to the demands of justice and the sympathies of humanity; and on this moral and religious question to give their frank, and unreserved, and energetic assistance. Ministers of every denomination ought to unite here. Give him the Wesleyan minister, and he was his brother on this subject, and would cordially give him the right hand of fellowship. There was not any man bearing the Christian name with whom he would not join heart and hand in using all means for awakening the consciences of men, and impressing on their minds the great duty of aiming to put an end to this horrid system. He was far from being convinced that many of the most dreadful visitations of Divine Providence that have lighted on our country may not have been inflicted in righteous retribution, for our tardiness, our coldness, our lukewarmness on this great moral question—the emancipation of our wretched and injured fellow-creatures from West Indian bondage. He would add no more. He had risen merely that this company might feel assured that it will be more and more the united determination of the ministers of Jesus Christ, in every division of the Christian church, to relax in no fit effort to give their testimony and their support on all suitable occasions till the extinction of this mighty evil shall be accomplished, and the foul stain be effaced from our country which for so many generations has blackened and disgraced it. It never would become him to interfere with regard to giving votes on political subjects; but the morning after the recent debate on Mr. Buxton's motion, he said, "I will turn round to the ministers directly; I will do all I can do to uphold the first administration who have proclaimed simply, honestly, fairly, and determinately, their abhorrence of slavery." (Loud cheers.)

Mr. O'CONNELL rose to propose an amendment on the motion. He would substitute the words "Great Britain and Ireland," instead of "England" merely. Scotland and Ireland felt an equal interest in this great question with the people of England, and ought not to be excluded from their share in the Resolution and in the Address which accompanied it. No man could more sincerely abhor, detest, and abjure slavery than he did. He held it in utter detestation, however men might attempt to palliate or excuse it by differences of colour, creed, or clime. In all its gradations, and in every form, he was its mortal foe. —He would now explain why he proposed an adjournment of the debate on Mr. Buxton's motion the other evening in the House of Commons; though he was not then aware that there would not be another opportunity this session. But the speech of Mr. Burge had filled him with such disgust and indignation that he could not then have spoken calmly. "What," said Mr. Burge, "*would you come in between a man and his freehold?*" "I started," said Mr. O'Connell, "as if something unholy had trampled on my father's grave, and I exclaimed with horror, 'A freehold in a human being!'—(Loud cheers.) He knew nothing of Mr. Burge; he would give him credit for being a gentleman of humanity; but if he be so, it only made the case the stronger; for the circumstance of such a man upholding such a system showed the horrors of that

system in itself, and its effect in deceiving the minds of those who are connected with it, wherever it exists. Mr. Burge referred to the Jamaica Assembly, and boasted of the slaves being now admitted to give testimony.* And what had made the difference since 1824? The exertions of the Anti-Slavery Society. As the friends of abolition in England went forward they dragged Jamaica along with them. In 1826, the majority against that proposition was reduced to 23, and in 1828, the bill was passed to allow slaves who were baptized and instructed to give evidence.† But mark how they coupled this with a resolution not to permit any man who was not a clergyman of the church of England the power of baptizing and instructing the negroes in Christianity. This Mr. Burge justified, and said, who else had a right to judge who were the safest persons to be intrusted to do this? The safest persons! What, and was it not enough to hold their bodies in thralldom, but must they usurp the dominion also of the immortal soul! The safest persons! and was that a question for them to decide? It was a question between the Christian and his God—and they would not allow the negro to be a Christian unless according to the shape and fashion they thought fit to prescribe. (Hear, hear.) Oh, the debasing system! It was not enough to hold in servitude their bones and sinews, and blood and flesh, but they must have in thralldom also their spiritual feelings and sentiments—they must prescribe the way in which they shall serve their God who loved and died for them.—(Loud cheers.) They say the slave is *not fit* to receive his freedom—that he could not endure freedom without revolting. Why, does he not endure slavery without revolting? With all that he has to bear, he does not revolt now; and will he be more ready to revolt when you take away the lash? Foolish argument! But he would take them up on their own ground—the ground of *gradual* amelioration and preparation. Well, and are not eight years of education sufficient to prepare a man for any thing. Seven years are accounted quite sufficient for an apprenticeship to any profession, or for any art or science; and are not eight years enough for the Negro? If eight years have passed without preparation, so would eighty if we were to allow them so many. There is a time for every thing—but it would seem there is no time for the emancipation of the slave. Mr. Buxton had most ably and unanswerably stated to the House of Commons, the awful decrease in population; that in fourteen colonies in the course of ten years there had been a decrease in the population of 45,801—that is, in other words, 45,801 human beings had in that period been murdered by this system—their bodies gone to the grave—their spirits before their God. In the eight years which they have had to educate their slaves for liberty, according to the resolutions of 1823, but which have been useless to them—in those eight years, one twelfth have gone into the grave, murdered! “Every day,” continued Mr. O'Connell, “ten victims are thus despatched! While we are speaking, they are sinking—while we are debating, they are dying! As human, as accountable beings, why should we suffer this any longer? Let every man take his own share in this business. I am resolved, if the people of Ireland send me back to Parliament, that I will bear my part. I purpose fully to divide the House on the motion, *that every Negro child born after the 1st of January, 1832, shall be free.*—(Loud cheers.) They say, O do not emancipate the slaves suddenly, they are not prepared, they will revolt! Are they afraid of the insurrection of the infants?

* The assertion for which Mr. O'Connell gives credit to Mr. Burge, we beg to observe, is an untrue assertion, a false statement.

† But this bill has had no operation. It was disallowed on account of its wickedly persecuting clauses.

Or do they think that the mother will rise up in rebellion as she hugs her little freeman to her breast, and thinks that he will one day become her protector? Or will she teach him to be her avenger? Or, no, there can be no such pretence.—We are responsible for what we do, and also for the influence of our example. Think you that the United States of America would be able to hold up their heads among the nations,—the United States, who shook off their allegiance to their sovereign, and declared that it was the right of *every man* to enjoy freedom—of every man, whether black, white, or red;—who made this declaration before the God of armies, and then, when they had succeeded in their enterprise, forgot their vow, and made slaves, and used the lash and the chain;—would they dare to take their place among the nations, if it were not that England countenances them in the practice? And then look at Mexico; there the slaves were liberated, not in a time of peace when they could be watched and guarded, no, but in a time of revolution and of war. Did they rise up to cut the throats of their former owners? Ah, no! they entered into the society of freemen with a feeling of generous and deep oblivion of the past; and continue among the most useful and peaceful of the inhabitants.—(Cheers.) With this example—with the splendid instance of one whose name and exploits would long be held sacred in the annals of freedom, the venerable Bolivar, who commenced his glorious career of liberty by giving freedom to 800 Negroes that he possessed himself—sacrificing his fortune, and consolidating the civil institutions of his country—and who concluded with the sacred words, “finally I beseech my countrymen never to allow any distinction in colour to make any political distinction between them.”—(Cheers.) With these examples—and with the example of Britain before her, America could not long resist; and we would thus not only have the happiness of redeeming 800,000 of our fellow-subjects from slavery, but give to mankind an example that will make the existence of the system of slavery elsewhere wholly impossible.”—(Great cheering.)

He was sorry to say that the Press had not done its duty. He arraigned the press of England of turpitude on this great subject. Some important discussions lately took place in the House of Commons on the subject of compulsory manumission, and he looked the next morning in the papers for what had been said, hoping it would go forth to the world, but not one word could he find. No doubt the reporters did their duty, but the blame rests on the editors and proprietors. It could not be inhumanity—it could not be chance—it must therefore be something infinitely baser. Now what did he suggest? This, then; newspapers of course are mere commercial speculations. Let the friends of freedom make them good commercial speculations to those only who protect the cause of humanity. (Loud cheers.) Very little of that dexterity would soon bring the press to our side. And whether that should be the effect or not they discharged a duty, which would be a sufficient reward. This power might be at present a great power against our prospects; but let the friends of humanity lay their shoulder to the wheel, and it would go concurrently with them.

And were we, he would ask, to endure this disgrace of slavery longer? Were we not parties to it if we endured it? Did this assembly know that the slave can still receive thirty-nine lashes without excuse—any number of lashes with excuse? He urged them to reflect, how deplorable must be the state of things in a community where the ruffians who flogged Kitty Hylton and Eleanor James were secure of impunity. Was it not true that in Jamaica women were still cruelly beaten? And was this wretched system to be longer tolerated?

After urging those who heard him, and the electors of England in

general, to do their duty, by supporting such candidates as were pledged to support the cause of Negro emancipation, Mr. O'Connell concluded a speech, which had been cheered throughout with the most enthusiastic acclamations of the meeting, in the following terms:—"I will carry with me to my own country the recollection of this splendid scene. Where is the man that can resist the argument of this day? I go to my native land under its influence; and let me remind you that land has this glory, that no slave-ship was ever launched from any of its numerous ports. It has been said, that the Wesleyan Methodists have been very useful in this great cause: I am glad of it; they may on some questions have been my opponents, but I must honour the men who aim to do good, and to show their love to God by their love to men. It is to their honour, and not to their reproach, that they have been persecuted. It is my wish to imitate them: we agree on the general principle of charity, though we differ on matters of faith. I will gladly join my Methodist neighbour to do good to the poor Negro slaves. Let each extend to them the arm of his compassion; let each aim to deliver his fellow-man from distress. I shall go and tell my countrymen that they ought not to be laggards in the race of humanity."

Mr. SHIEL seconded the amendment of Mr. O'Connell, that "Great Britain and Ireland" should be substituted for "Englan'." He said, he, and those who knelt at the same altars as himself, bore as strong an abhorrence to slavery as its most zealous antagonists in that great assembly. "If a sceptic," said he, "were to ask me, wherefore I feel so profound a sympathy for the children of Africa; I would answer in the celebrated response which elicited such pious plaudits from the instincts of humanity in a Roman theatre, 'I am a man;' and if a Christian and not a sceptic, were to put the interrogatory to me, I should raise my hand and point to heaven. Where is the man familiar with the Gospel of Christ, the manual of pity and the pattern of kindness—where is the man who believes in Him who came into the world with the songs of angels and the accents of peace, and whose last words were words of mercy to mankind—where is the man who has embraced this system, that will not gladly combine with his fellows in this holy confederacy of pity and benevolence? This is a case in which, as far as facts are concerned, we may all come to an issue. No facts can be more free from exaggeration; no facts can be less complicated. In the year 1823, Mr. Canning proposed three resolutions; they were adopted by the House of Commons without a single dissenting voice; they were issued as ordinances to the Crown Colonies, and recommended for adoption for the Chartered. But were they obeyed? No! Jamaica took the cartel which contained her sovereign's mandate, and shook it, dripping with the Negro's blood, in England's face! I shall not go through the resolutions *seriatim*. It will be sufficient to show the prominent features of African suffering, in which Government has interposed in vain. The sabbath is not to the Negro a day of rest. He fulfils upon it the primary malediction, and pours his sweat out of his forehead depressed in toil to the earth, instead of lifting it up in supplication to heaven. The slave is denied even the miserable privilege of being a fixture to the estate. He is treated as a moveable,—he is sold apart from his family. The husband is torn from the wife—the child is plucked by the hand of heartless vendition from the mother's arms. The evidence of a Negro is not received against that of a white. The African father is struck dumb, as the violator of his daughter's honour takes the Gospel of Christ, and presses it with an Iscariot kiss to his lips. The cart-whip is still used as a stimulant to labour. It is

the implement which serves to distinguish the few wretched diversities of slave existence. It announces the tropical morning, and summons the Negro to his task; its dreadful reverberation peals through the groves sacred to cruelty, and urges on the labour which ministers to European luxury through African torture; it calls the slave to his shed, or rather to his manger,—it is his matin and his vesper-bell; its cracking is a substitute for the curfew, and intimates the brief respite which is allowed for renovation, in which the Negro is permitted to forget in a few hours of sleep that he is a slave. Thus the cart-whip, associates itself with all the varieties of Negro being. It is ever either in his ears, before his eyes, or on his back. An effort has been made by Government to put the power of tormenting under some control, and to prescribe limits and regulations to the caprices of cruelty. But what horrors are at this very moment before us. The records of colonial judicature are steeped in blood. Two facts are sufficient to illustrate the entire system. A woman seized her female slave, and, to season her own appetite for torture, turning epicure in the feast of agony, she opened the eyelids of her victim, introduced pepper into that delicate and precious sense, and aspersed it with the subtlest particles of pain. There is another and, if possible, a case still more horrible. What will be said by the apologists for colonial atrocity, of the priest who, with the very same hand which had distributed the sacramental bread, and put the commemorative chalice in circulation round the altar, perpetrated an outrage against humanity upon a female slave, a creature redeemed by the blood of the same God as himself; and for this outrage against the instincts of manliness, and this insult to Heaven, he has been acquitted by a tribunal which, by its implied assent to his enormities, has become the participator of his infamy, and entitled itself to share in the immortality of his crime? With these facts before us, what regard shall we pay to those, who tell us, with a saccharine suavity, and dropping sugar from their mouths, that we can form no judgment of these matters at the distance of 4,000 miles? But the shriek of agonised humanity can traverse 4,000 miles of ocean, and through winds and over waves pierce into England's heart. I think that those who have lived in the colonies are, in many respects, the worst judges. The worst feature of slavery is, that it alike degrades the slave and vitiates the tyrant. A familiarity with oppression produces an ossification of the heart—it hardens and petrifies all the sensibilities of our nature. (Cheers.) It is idle to look to the colonial legislatures for redress. The experiment has already been made with respect to the slave-trade. The colonists made it the subject of encomium: to them a ship waited from the coast of Guinea with its freight of human agony, presented an object of moral and picturesque beauty. They insisted that it was beneficial to the Negroes to be transferred to their merciful superintendence. They told us that slavery was beneficial to the Africans themselves; that they removed them from their own adust and barren clime to bring them to a land of unrivalled beauty and plenty.—They told us such tales as these; and continued the trade in human flesh. England waited long; but at last, finding that it was in vain to expect their concurrence, issued her mighty fiat against that impious traffic. We are thus taught by experience the futility of looking to the colonies for an alteration in their system. What then remains? To legislate for the colonies. I am not insensible to the obstacles which may stand in the way of instantaneous liberation, but at all events means may be taken to nurse the rising African population into liberty. If we cannot effectually relieve the parents, we may take the cradle with the Negro child and lay it at the feet of our legislators: if the

arm of British sympathy and benevolence is not strong enough to reach across the Atlantic to rescue the adult from the grasp of the oppressor, it may yet be able to press the infant negro to its bosom and give it wholesome aliment, and thus prepare it for future emancipation. I trust that the time is not distant when the proud aphorism of the poet, "Slaves cannot breathe in England," shall dilate itself, and spread beyond any limit of insular locality, and when English power and English liberty shall be commensurate. It was the boast of the Spaniard that "the sun never set on his dominions;" let it be the vaunt of Britain that the sun of liberty shines wherever her power exists or her banners wave."

Mr. POWNALL congratulated the Society on what they had gained, but cautioned them against being deceived by Ministers in their professions of abhorrence of slavery, and to beware lest the artifice of 1823 should again be practised upon them. He advised them to take the advice of Dr. Lushington, and to make it their determination not to rest till a time was fixed after which no subject of the British Government should longer be held in bondage. The blast of liberty, he assured them, would go forth from this country, swell in its progress over 4000 miles, purify the atmosphere of the country to which it reached, and be wafted back again in grateful praises and thanksgivings.

The Rev. J. BURNETT rose to propose the third and fourth resolutions:—

"That the buying, or selling, or holding of our fellow men as slaves, is contrary to the Christian religion, and to the principles of the British constitution.

"That, under the strongest rational conviction, fortified by the experience of all ages, that the holders of slaves are, by the very circumstances of their situation, rendered as unfit, as they have always proved themselves unwilling, to frame laws for the benefit of their bondmen, this Assembly cannot refrain from avowing their utter despair of receiving any effectual aid from the Colonists in the prosecution of their great object."

He said, he recollected the time when all that was looked for by the friends of the slaves was the abolition of the African Slave Trade. That object was gained, and the trade in human flesh was abolished by England, and partially by other powers. The second period was when only the *mitigation* and *gradual abolition* of slavery was asked for. But the third period had now arrived, when the friends of the slave spoke out, and, throwing away all such timid qualifications, openly demanded that slavery should cease altogether. (Hear, hear.) They had heard the demand made that day with a force and feeling which thrilled through this great assembly; and earnestly did he hope that the appeal might retain its influence until it had produced the utter extinction of this abominable system. He would ask whether the assembly which he then addressed, splendid as it was, did not feel itself degraded in belonging to a country in which it was found necessary to discuss at the present day the propriety of abolishing slavery. It was a foul disgrace to our country that such discussions as this took place in the nineteenth century. It was a stigma on our national glory which must go down with our annals, even if abolition takes place, and it would never be forgotten that Britain struggled so long and stoutly to maintain the existence of such a monstrous system as slavery in her colonies. (Loud cheers.) Notwithstanding the eloquent speeches they had that day heard—speeches in which the feelings of the speakers were visibly conveyed to their hearers—notwithstanding all that had been said of the propriety of emancipating every slave born after January 1st, 1832, there still remained a consideration on which he should like to express his opinion—What was to be done with the adults? Were the fathers and mothers of these free negro children to be allowed to be left in their chains, to go down in their present degraded situation to their graves? Was this generation to be left until its last man and woman had dropped into an untimely

grave? Was the proposition that had been set forth so touchingly by Mr. O'Connell to be carried into effect—and was nothing to be done for the adults? We were told that they must be *educated* for freedom. Through what channel was this instruction to be conveyed? Was it to come from the colonists themselves? He would trust *them* with nothing. If they were persons of whose character and principles we were ignorant—if he had just arrived from Peking, or some other distant country, and had only heard of England's honour, and England's honesty, he might, looking upon these slave proprietors as Englishmen, be disposed to commit to their keeping any trust however sacred. But we knew these Colonial Assemblies; they had been long tried; they were opposed to England; and therefore he would not trust them, as Englishmen. England was libelled in being associated with them. Some evil star gave them to England in their birth, and caught them away under its malign influence to their present abode; but in being wafted across the Atlantic they appeared to have lost all the right spirit and feelings of Englishmen. He would, therefore, leave nothing to their discretion, even under a penalty for disobedience. We knew well how they could evade, and combine to evade, and therefore under no security could we trust to their co-operation. (Cheers.) If he might give his advice, it would be to this effect—that as Parliament was about to entertain a proposition that no slave should be born after the 1st of Jan. 1832, so no slave should exist after the 1st of Jan. 1833. (Immense cheering.) He was glad to find the Meeting not dissatisfied with the proposition, and disposed to deal honestly with the adults—by the fathers and mothers of those infants to whom they were disposed to grant the boon of freedom. This measure once adopted, he would say to the colonial legislatures, We will not prescribe to you any particular rules or regulations, but we tell you that all your present slave population shall be free after a certain date; and having apprised you of that circumstance, we leave it to yourselves, who say you know best how to deal with the Negroes, to make such legislative regulations as this new state of things shall require. After January 1833, they will be about your ears, and you will have to deal with them as freemen. If Parliament did its duty, we should have all the Attorneys General at their work, endeavouring to promote the great cause of freedom, and should see none of their class coming here to effervesce in a spirit of contumacious hostility against the advocates for the extinction of slavery. But under present circumstances, the colonists and their partisans acted differently. They were not bound to act reasonably. And why? Because the British people sent soldiery enough to protect them in their mal-administration.

The Rev. Gentleman adverted to what had been stated by a former speaker, that we were responsible for the existence of slavery in the West Indies by the support and encouragement which we gave the colonists. He fully approved of the catechism which had been suggested by the Hon. and Learned Gentleman for Parliamentary Candidates at the approaching elections, but he would go somewhat farther, and in addition to making the candidate promise that he would support this question whenever it came forward, he would also make him promise that on every occasion when it was discussed he should be in attendance in his place, and nothing should excuse him but the *bona fide* certificate of a physician. (Cheers.)

Referring to the words of the motion, he proceeded to contend, that neither in the principles of the British Constitution, nor in those of Christianity, was there any thing which could justify the existence of slavery. The very foundation of Christianity was hostile to the principle of slavery. It was when man was morally enslaved—when he had sold himself to another master, that the Son of God came down to re-

claim him and redeem him. In the Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon we find that he recommends to him to receive Onesimus his former slave, "not now as a servant;" (The word is rendered servant in the translation, but in the original it means a slave;) "but above a servant, a brother beloved, especially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh and in the Lord." Onesimus had been a slave, and having robbed his master, went to Rome, where Divine Providence gave him an opportunity to hear the Word of God from the mouth of the Apostle. That Word he received to salvation, and the Apostle had sent him back to his master with the words which he (Mr. Burnett) had quoted, advising him to receive him as a friend and a brother, and not as a slave. This was the language of the New Testament, and if the colonists studied its precepts, they would not if they felt their power permit so foul a stain on Christianity as slavery to exist. He proceeded to contend, that even according to the Old Testament, which was a peculiar economy, slavery was prohibited; in support of which he quoted the text, "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, ye shall surely put to death." He wished the colonial assemblies, who professed to lay great stress upon passages from the Bible, would look to that book for every thing, and not select such parts merely as they thought suited them. He wished they would take the book, the whole book, and nothing but the book. (Cheers.) If they did, we should not hear them talk so much nonsense as they now did, in flying from text to text without any regard to the connexion. The Rev. Gentleman then contended, that the slavery of the Egyptian house of bondage mentioned in the Old Testament, though such as ultimately drew down the utmost severity of Divine vengeance, was light and trivial compared to the slavery of the present day. He would be ready at once to give up the whole question if he were not able most satisfactorily to prove, that the slavery of the people of Israel in Egypt was perfect freedom compared with the slavery which now exists in our West India colonies. What was the statement in the Old Testament? That seventy came down to Egypt, and that their descendants settled in the land of Goshen. Where was the Goshen of the West Indies? All the West Indies together would not make one Goshen. But let the colonists mark the result, and note the striking contrast which it exhibited, in the conditions of Israelitish and negro slavery. After this kind of bondage had been going on for 400 years, what was the result? Why, that the descendants of the seventy who went down to Goshen, had increased so much, that at their going out of Egypt there were 600,000 fighting men. Yet that was the slavery for which Pharaoh and the Egyptians were so fearfully punished—an example which it would be well for the colonists to consider. Let them contrast that immense increase with what had been stated that day by the Hon. Gentleman who opened the proceedings, that in the last ten years there had been a diminution of 45,000 in our colonial slave population. (Hear, hear.)

He then proceeded to a brief examination of the principles of the British Constitution, which he happily compared to a tree, from which any exerescence or misguided branch should be cut off as it arose; and he went on to show, from the nature of our institutions, the construction of our legislature, our free debates and free discussions, that slavery was incompatible with the constitution which we enjoy. If slavery had crept in, and for a time been sanctioned by our legislature,—if man-stealing had grown up into a profitable trade, it was because the British lion slept, and was betrayed by his jackalls. Man-stealing was permitted, and slaves were brought in thousands to our colonies, until at length the clanking of their chains aroused the lion from his slumbers; but now he shakes the dew-drops from his mane, and raises his terrific

voice, and the West India hydra trembles before him. What the object of this Meeting should be obtained, slavery ~~was~~ ^{was} a ghastly whiteless corpse, and be buried for ever amidst the triumphs of the British people. (Cheers.) When the abolition of the slave trade was called for, it was said, that the colonists afforded a home and a protection to the negroes; that they enjoyed personal comfort, which they could not enjoy if left in their own wild and uncivilized state in Africa. This was the language of the colonists. How ~~did~~ ^{did} their conduct tally with that language? They bought the slaves to sell them kindly, they said; but unhappily their kindness ~~was~~ ^{was} when they flogged them, when they branded them, when they sold them from one to the other—~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ ^{same} ~~and~~ ^{and}, as was proved by the returns alluded to, when they destroyed them in thousands by severity of labour! (Hear, hear.) This was colonial kindness; let it be judged of by its fruits. But when any other parties but the colonists themselves offered to shew real kindness to the slaves, by procuring them some mitigation of suffering, some protection from outrage, they were termed meddling enthusiasts. Indeed such was their notion of slavery, that some of them actually looked on it as a blessing. Were they disposed to apply it to us across the Atlantic? It would appear as if they were. He attended a meeting some time ago at the Thatched House Tavern, at which a gentleman got up and gravely said, that the abolition of the feudal system in so many countries of Europe was the reason why so many poor were found amongst them, and particularly in England. Another gentleman ~~voiced~~ ^{voiced} to the opinion of Fletcher of Salton, that every pauper ought to be made a slave, and seemed to hint that something of the kind would be a great improvement in the condition of our poor; and these sayings were loudly applauded by the West Indians present. Was it then, he would ask, to such men that we should intrust the improvement of the condition of slaves—to men so enamoured of slavery as to dare, within a hundred yards of the palace of William the Fourth, to suggest its application to England and Ireland? (Hear, hear.) He then went on to shew, that in the present age of impetus, in the present state of public feeling, the cause of abolition must go forward, and would not cease, until it had carried the influence of British spirit and British legislation to every part of our colonial possessions. The cry was raised, the game was up, the British people were joining in the chorus, and he hoped a new Parliament would come in at the death, and close the chase for ever.

The Rev. RICHARD WATSON observed, that two practical objects had been brought before the meeting. The first was the Address proposed by Dr. Lushington in reference to Parliamentary candidates; the second, the hint thrown out by Mr. Pownall, that we do not accept of the plan proposed by Government. He said, that greatly as he confided in the patriotism and public spirit of our present ministry, and fully persuaded as he was, that if hope could not be placed in them, no hope could be reposed in any ministry on this subject, yet he was not satisfied that the inquiry had not been gone into. Neither was he satisfied with the plan of ministers. It was bottomed on the Resolutions of 1823 and the ordinances that were founded on them. But these Resolutions were very suspicious in their origin. They were connected with the name of Mr. Canning, it was true, and perhaps that name derived much of its splendour from them; (Hear, hear;) but when they came to be looked strictly into and embodied for practical operation, they were found to be exceedingly defective. ~~Not~~ ^{Not} have our edifying governments dealt honestly with them; for it has come out by the avowal of some of those statesmen, that it was considered a great

error and embarrassment to be pledged to these resolutions. The plans, then, which are founded on those resolutions can never satisfy us. So far as they went they were to be applauded and supported by us; but unless they went a step farther, unless a period were fixed, and that not a distant one, beyond which slavery should not continue, all these preparatory measures would have no good effect. (Cheers.)

He would touch only on another subject. It has been said, that Christian instruction should be employed in order to *prepare* the slaves for the enjoyment of freedom, after some very long period had elapsed. Now in his (Mr. Watson's) opinion it was impossible to spread Christianity through the mass of the slave population so long as it continues in slavery. Christianity had indeed had some noble triumphs in the West Indies, but few comparatively among the field-negroes. And this was the great objection to the system. Legislators might give them sabbaths: but they would be robbed of them practically; for there was a power in every planter greater than the power of the British Government itself. Christian zeal might multiply missionaries; and yet none of these missionaries could enter an estate without leave from the owner, to instruct his slaves: the consequence was that a variety of obstacles were continually thrown in the way of the diffusion of Christianity throughout the population at large. But even if it were possible to extend Christianity throughout the mass of population, those persons who imagined that it would make the slaves quiet and content with slavery were greatly mistaken. (Hear, hear.) Christianity would make better *servants*, but worse *slaves*. It creates honesty, industry, and conscientiousness; but it cannot create them without the love of freedom; and slavery was felt to be an evil most deeply by the man who had been brought under the influence of Christianity. (Cheers.) By religion the mind becomes enlightened, the feelings acute and tender, and the social relations become more united and strengthened. Would a Christian father then endure it as well as a Pagan father that his children should be separated from him?—that his daughters, whom he had educated in virtue, should be subdued for pollution by the influence of the whip?—a thing most general throughout the slave Colonies:—and if the whip be employed not merely to cut the flesh, but to cut deeper, to separate the marriage ties—was it possible that Christianity should teach a man to tolerate that? There was no libel so gross as that Christianity could be made the instrument of defending such an outrage. Our religion was not a religion to teach slaves to kiss their chains; but a religion to teach freemen how to use their freedom.

He thought there was now ground for hope and comfort, especially from this, that a free press had been established in Jamaica: the secrets of that prison house could no longer be kept; that mighty engine would disclose them to the population of the colonies and likewise to this country. There was hope also arising from the free coloured population, who had declared that although holders of slaves themselves, as soon as the British Government required them they would liberate their bondmen, (loud cheers,)—a circumstance which not only greatly redounded to their honour, but was of the greatest importance also in the argument—because it refutes all the objections as to the practicability of emancipation, consistently with the interests and safety of the Colonies.

He placed no confidence at all upon what ministers proposed to do, unless we could, by our zeal and perseverance, induce them to take another step, and to *fix a period beyond which slavery shall not exist*. Without that, little or nothing could be effected; for whatever the legislation of this country might do in the way of amelioration, if it come through the agency of the colonists, it would be vain and might be pernicious,—like the pure dew of heaven that descends upon

the manchineel-tree, which is converted into poison, and blackens and cauterises every thing that has fled to it for shelter. (Loud cheers.) He had hope however from the ministers themselves; for the spirit in which they had spoken, and the determination they had shown as far as they had gone, warranted a good deal of confidence; especially when they should be better supported by the expression of public opinion. Long might they possess their seats if they would but apply themselves honestly to this subject; but if they did not, the sooner they fall from them the better. (Loud cheers.) Let them remember that every administration that has ever trimmed with this great question has tumbled to pieces. (Hear, hear.) The time was now come when the work must be done. God himself had heard the cry of this oppressed race; and he thought we might say, without being charged with enthusiasm, that HE himself had come down to deliver them. (Cheers.) And though the thunders of the firmament might not be audibly directed against their task masters, as in the case of the Egyptian bondmen, yet there was a thunder now heard—the thunder of the indignation of a free and freedom-loving people—a thunder which shall not cease to roll from year to year until it has forced Avarice to loosen her gripe, and Tyranny to give up his claim upon the wretched creatures they have so long held in bondage.

Mr. Buxton observed, that although Mr. Burnett had drawn a very accurate comparison between the condition of the Egyptian and West Indian bondmen, there was one point he had overlooked, and one of which we hear a great deal, namely the subject of *compensation*. Now there really was compensation in the former case, for the bondmen of the Egyptians went out laden with jewels of silver and of gold. This was the compensation given in the case of the Egyptian slaves—and it was given precisely as it should be. He was a friend to *equitable* compensation—a little to those who suffer a little—and a great deal to those unfortunate slaves who have suffered so much.—(Great applause.)

Mr. EVANS in proposing the fifth and sixth resolutions, very briefly addressed the meeting, congratulating them on the evident progress which this great cause had made, and exhorting them to improve the present favourable political crisis, and to rest satisfied with nothing short of a complete and perfect triumph in the entire emancipation of every bondman in the British dominions. The Resolutions moved by him were in the following terms:—

“That this Assembly consider it incumbent on them to renew the declaration of their decided conviction, that Slavery is not merely an abuse to be mitigated, but an enormity to be suppressed; that it involves the exercise of severities on the part of the master, and the endurance of sufferings on the part of the Slave, which no laws can effectually prevent; and that to impose on the British people the involuntary support of a system so essentially iniquitous, is an injustice no longer to be endured.

“That the experience of the last eight years has not only furnished additional evidence of the criminality and incurable inhumanity of Slavery, but has also demonstrated incontrovertibly, that it is only by the direct intervention of Parliament that any effectual remedy can be applied to this enormous evil; and that it is the unalterable determination of this Meeting to leave no lawful means unattempted for obtaining, by Parliamentary enactment, the total abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions.”

Mr. GEO. STEPHEN rose to second the resolutions, and proceeded to address the Chairman, [Mr. Buxton, who had been called to the chair on the departure of Lord Suffield,] in the following terms:—“I shall not detain the meeting many minutes; but I have a duty to perform of no ordinary kind. I am charged publicly to declare to you the chairman, and to this great meeting, that there are many who are absolutely dissatisfied with the amendment proposed in the House of

Commons upon the motion made by you the other night. I have received that commission—not from a parent whose name I cannot mention here without reverence;—he will declare his sentiments at his own time:—but I am charged by parties officially connected with many of the Anti-Slavery Associations throughout the country, to take an opportunity of declaring most publicly and most emphatically, that they deprecate any appeal to the Colonial Legislatures. You have told us what their Councils are. You have mentioned the case of the Mosses—but I quote the shocking fact from Mr. Huskisson's despatch, that the most respectable people in the island came forward to testify to the respectability, and the humanity of those who murdered the slave by flogging.—(Hear, hear.) Now if this be so, if murder, under the most cruel circumstances, aggravated murder, entitled those who were guilty of perpetrating it, to be called the most humane and respectable people of the island, such views and feelings will not, assuredly, tend greatly to heighten our regard for the Colonial Assemblies themselves. I know full well that it is fashionable to say, “you don't know the dangers of immediate emancipation,”—but you never hear those dangers specified; you are told in general terms that there is hazard and danger, but nobody will venture to say in what that danger consists. Now I may appeal to yourself, Sir, whether I have not some reason for saying that there is no danger in immediate emancipation, but that there is danger if emancipation be deferred until the Negroes make common cause with their free coloured brethren, and emancipate themselves by the sword. There lies, in my view, the only real danger in the case, and I at least will declare it, if no one else will.—(Cheers.) It is quite absurd to provide slaves with rights, to give them privileges, and to declare them incapable of asserting those rights, and defending those privileges; to give them legal powers and subject them to legal incapacity.—(Cheers.) To refer them to protectors, to magistrates, and councils of protection is absurd, is trifling. I for one declare that the only council of protection in which any confidence can be placed, is that before which I have now the honour to stand.—To you I intrust their cause—to your maternal bosoms I commend their children—to your fraternal affections I commend their fathers; show yourselves worthy of the trust, and let your voice be raised in the words of these resolutions, with acclamations that shall re-echo through the West India Isles, that we will endure this inhuman, this detestable system no longer!”—(Loud cheers.)

The Rev. J. W. CUNNINGHAM said, there ought to be no men more interested in the cause of this meeting than the Clergy of the Church of England, and, God helping him, he would give it every aid in his power. They had been told that particular instances were most powerful; and supposing he introduced a murderer with a dagger into that assembly, who before a year would put every one there to death, would they let him out of doors? would they talk to him of amelioration? No. They would say, seize the monster. Well; just such a monster was Slavery, which annually destroyed 4,000 persons in our Sugar Islands. It went farther; it not only put bodies but souls to death; wearing out, as far as in its power, the body by intolerable bondage, and preventing souls from reaching glory. Another word and he was done. Now was the time for action—for every arm to be raised and every lip opened to aid the cause of Negro emancipation. The Rev. gentleman concluded by moving a vote of thanks to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, the Patron of the Society, expressive of the regret of the Meeting for his unavoidable absence, and of the grateful sense they entertained of the uniform support he has given to the great cause they were associated to support. The motion was carried unanimously and with acclamation. The meeting then separated, after also voting thanks to the Right Hon. Chairman, Lord Suffield.

II.—ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND,
UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED AT THE GENERAL MEETING, APRIL 23.

THE Society for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British dominions, earnestly request your attention to the present state of the question. The Dissolution will probably soon take place, when the great body of Electors will be strongly agitated with discussing the measure of Reform, which has divided the existing Parliament. At this crisis we entreat you, in the midst of conflict and excitement, to remember the sacred cause to which, in conjunction with ourselves, you are solemnly pledged. Upon the exertions now made, as far as human wisdom may foresee, mainly depends the continuance or extinction of that system which has so long prevailed, in violation of all the principles of the British Constitution, and in subversion of all justice, outraging every feeling of humanity, and utterly repugnant to the precepts of the religion we profess to acknowledge. We pray you to rouse yourselves to strenuous, persevering and well-organized exertions; and we suggest for your consideration, the following measures:—To call meetings of your Committees, and to invite to join you all who prefer humanity to oppression, truth to falsehood, freedom to slavery:—to appoint frequent periods for assembling; to form a list of all the Electors who can be properly influenced in the approaching contest, each individual answering for himself and as many more as he can bring to aid:—to make strict inquiries of every Candidate, not only whether he is decidedly favourable to the extinction of Slavery, but whether or not he will attend the Debates in Parliament, when that question shall be discussed; herein taking special care not to be deceived by general professions of disapprobation of Slavery, but ascertaining that the Candidate has adopted the determination to assist in carrying through measures for its speedy annihilation. None look with greater horror on the shedding of blood, or the remotest chance of occasioning such a calamity than ourselves; but we are in our consciences convinced, and that after investigation the most careful and scrupulous, that from the emancipation we recommend, no risk to the safety of the white inhabitants could arise; on the contrary we verily believe, that the continuance of Slavery renders desolation and bloodshed much more probable; and that if the country does not repent of the sin of Slavery and cast it from her, it may, by the just retribution of Providence, terminate in a convulsion destructive alike of life and property.

On behalf of Candidates who are known to hold these principles, and on behalf of such Candidates only, we ask your assistance; and this assistance may be most powerfully rendered, not merely by votes, but by open and public adoption of the Candidate on these avowed grounds, by the exertion of lawful influence, by saving him time in his canvass, and by relieving him from expense in going to the poll.

We assure you, that on our part, we will not be backward in our efforts for the attainment of the same ends; and we will, from time to time, afford you all the information we may deem requisite.

In the truth and justice of our Cause we are all confident; but men must work by human means. Without strenuous efforts, the gold and combination of our interested opponents, may leave the cause without that support in Parliament which is essential to success, and so continue, for an indefinite period, sufferings indescribable and iniquity incalculable.

We solemnly conjure you to shew yourselves, by your courage, energy, and perseverance, faithful in the cause of Truth and Mercy, and then, with His aid to whom all good is to be ascribed, we trust this accumulation of guilt and misery may be speedily annihilated.

Signed in behalf of the London Committee,

T. F. BUXTON,

S. GURNEY,

W. WILBERFORCE,

W. SMITH,

T. CLARKSON.

Z. MACAULAY,

D. WILSON,

R. WATSON,

S. LUSHINGTON,



